

THE  
**CHAMBER MUSIC**  
**JOURNAL**

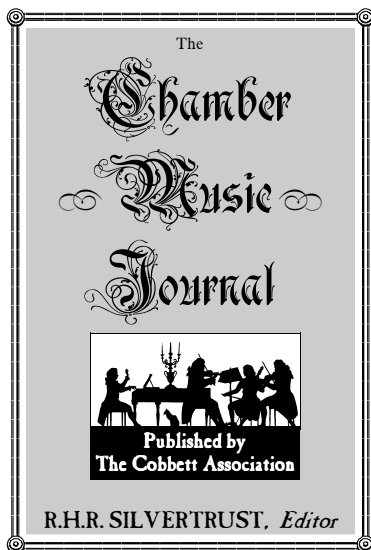
*The Essential Guide  
For Players & Listeners  
To The Wider World  
of Chamber Music*

***Joseph Marx's Works for  
Piano Quartet***  
***The Three String Trios  
Of John Antes***  
***Ernest Moeran's Phantasy  
Quartet for Oboe & Strings***

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# The Sounding Board-Letters to the Editor



## Mikhail Gnesin's Jewish Orchestra at the Ball in Nowhere Town for String Quartet?

Recently, at our weekly quartet session, my friend, who is a Russian émigré, brought with him a piece by Mikhail Gnesin, a composer I had never heard of. It was called *The Jewish Orchestra at the Ball in Nowhere Town*. Actually, that is what he said was the title of the work, but it was all in Cyrillic so I don't really know. It was in six short movements. When I asked him about it, he really couldn't tell me much other than the fact that the music had belonged to his father. Can you tell me more about Gnesin and this piece.

Jack Shapiro  
New York, NY

*Mikhail Gnesin (1883-1957) was born in Rostov on Don and moved with his family to St Petersburg where he entered the Conservatory, studying with Georgy Konus, Rimsky Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov. He lived and taught in Germany, briefly moved to Palestine and then returned to the Soviet Union, teaching at the institute which bears his name in Moscow, founded by his sisters. His music combines several elements. Originally he wrote in a late Russian romantic post Kor-sakovian style. He also became interested in Jewish folk music and while in Palestine during the 1920's collected folk tunes. His music trended toward the modern until he bowed to the pressures exerted by the Stalinist regime. He wrote a considerable amount of chamber music, but the Jewish Orchestra at the Ball in Nowhere Town, which is also known variously as The Jewish Orchestra at the Ball of Nothingtown, or at the Ball of the City Mayor, cannot be included among his chamber music works. It was commissioned by the famous Moscow theater director Vsevolod Meyerhold as "grotesque" incidental music to Gogol's play The Inspector General. An interesting aside is that at its premiere, Shostakovich played the piano in the theater orchestra. Although Meyerhold originally had the idea of hiring a Klezmer band to perform the music, after seeing Gnesin's score, he opted for a small pit orchestra. From the incidental music, Gnesin created a suite, his Op.41, The Suite consists of an Introduction, a Quadrille, a Polka, a Romance, a Gavotte and a Galopp. Although the music uses Jewish folk melodies, some of which Gnesin's grandfather composed, it was meant basically as a spoof to match the sarcastic parody of Gogol's attack of Tsarist bureaucracy. I do not know what the original instrumentation of the incidental music was, but the Suite is scored for small orchestra and is normally performed that way. What you played must have been an arrangement for string quartet.*

*Gnesin did not write a lot of chamber music. However, among his works, there are a few pieces for piano trio, a Sextet for Violin, Viola,*

*Cello, Clarinet, horn and Piano, a Requiem for Piano Quintet and some instrumental works.*

## Opera Composers Who Wrote String Quartets.

I played a "string quartet" by Giacomo Rossini. I told my host, whose music it was—I believe it was a Ricordi edition—that Rossini did not compose any string quartets and that what we played was either an arrangement or bogus. Am I correct? We then went on to discuss whether famous or successful opera composers ever produced any worthwhile string quartets. I maintained that they did not. If this is not so, please elucidate.

Douglas Hansen  
Seattle, WA

*With regard to Rossini, technically you are correct, however, the work you played was not as you put it bogus. He composed six String Sonatas for 2 Violins, Cello and Bass during the summer of 1804, when he was 12 years old. At the time he was staying at the home of amateur double bass enthusiast Agostini Triossi, which almost certainly explains the prominent role accorded to that instrument. They were most likely categorized as 'sonate a Quattro; a work for four voices. Rossini's score clearly labels each instrument in the singular. But nowadays, they are almost always performed by larger ensemble groups. Each violin line is typically carried by three performers, the cello 'voice' is duplicated and a single bass completes the ensemble. Because of the peculiarity of this ensemble, publishers quickly brought out arrangements for the standard string quartet. One of the more recent ones is an edition by Zanibon edited by Ettore Bonelli. As for opera composers writing "worthwhile" string quartets—that is a matter of personal opinion. However, among those who did, there are Mozart, Beethoven, Verdi, Donizetti who wrote 18!, Puccini, Gounod, Dvorak, Gershwin, Glinka, Kienzl, Fibich, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, Schillings, Smetana, Tchaikovsky, Zemlinsky, Weingartner to name but a few. Admittedly, the operas of some of the names on this list have not become popular outside of their own country such as those of Fibich and Kienzl, but were quite successful there. As for Korsakov, I personally would not call his quartets worthwhile, but others have.*

*We welcome your letters and articles. Letters to the Editor and manuscripts should be addressed to us at 601 Timber Trail, Riverwoods, IL 60015, USA. Letters published may be edited for reasons of space, clarity and grammar.*

# ERNEST MOERAN'S PHANTASY QUARTET FOR OBOE & STRINGS

Peregrine St. John Smith



Ernest Moeran (1894-1950) was a countryman, and it is fair to say most of his music is countryman's music, that is to say, redolent of the scenery of his native Norfolk and later of Ireland, and in particular County Kerry. Certainly we can hear that impulse at work in his chamber work, which is colored by the folk song and which is evocative of country landscapes which is regularly found in Moeran's musical imagery.

Fenlands full of reeds and mist. Moeran's father was sent to the remote parish of Becton, where he served as its vicar. And it was there that Moeran first heard its folk music, sung in the local pubs, that had a greater influence upon him than his exposure to the great masters which he only encountered later. So lasting and strong was the impression of this folk music upon Moeran that he must be included, along with Vaughan Williams and Percy Grainger, among the great folk song collector-composers. He collected about 150 folk songs in Norfolk and related that his preferred method was to sit in a country pub and wait until an old man started singing. He noted the song down then asked for more.

Moeran was born in Isleworth near London, but which was still semi-rural at the time of his birth in 1894. His father was a priest, and an Irish Protestant, who had originally come from Dublin. They soon moved to rural East Anglia, where the landscape dominated the boy's imagination. Moeran's roots were thus deep in remote Norfolk, with its wide coasts and big skies, and its

Moeran studied the violin and piano with local teachers in Norfolk before attending Uppingham School where he continued his studies with Robert Sterndale Bennett, grandson of the onetime famous composer William Sterndale Bennett. At the age of 18 in 1912, Moeran went down to London where he entered the Royal

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## THE WORKS FOR PIANO QUARTET OF JOSEPH MARX

By Hartmut Weinzinger



Joseph Marx (1882-1964) was born in Graz, capital of the Steiermark (Styria). Today, if he is remembered at all, it is as one of the best composers of lieder (art songs) after Schubert and Hugo Wolf. Marx received piano lessons first from his mother and then at a local music school in Graz, eventually attaining a considerable mastery of the instrument. He also taught himself to play the violin, viola and cello. While attending elementary school, his passion for music was furthered by the music teacher Joseph Gauby, a pupil of Robert Fuchs and an editor of Styrian folk songs. Marx's earliest compositions date from his years at Gymnasium (high school). Though obviously musically gifted, he initially followed his father's wishes by studying law, only to change to philosophy and art history, thereby occasioning a breach with his family. In 1908 he took a doctorate in

philosophy. In the same year, at the age of 26, he again began to compose. Within the space of four years, from 1908 to 1912, he had produced four fifths of his total output of 150 lieder. They proved surprisingly successful, and before long Marx had acquired an international reputation as a lied composer. His lieder arose in direct connection with his work as an accompanist, which surely contributed greatly to their naturalness and ingratiating suavity.

Astonishingly, Marx was self-taught in the art of composition. Before writing his earliest successful lieder he perfected his command of counterpoint, harmony and form mainly by intensively studying the organ. Soon he had attained a consummate mastery of the composer's craft. Andreas Liess, one of Marx's biographers, claimed that Marx had already discovered his innovative personal style by the age of 18, after which he deepened and refined it but left its characteristic traits basically un-

(Continued on page 6)

## John Antes

### 3 Trios for 2 Violins and Cello

by R.H.R. Silvertrust

The famous English music publisher John Bland caused himself to be made an accomplice in the perpetration of a unique mystery in the annals of American music. Bland did so, unconsciously perhaps, when he brought out an edition of three string trios by one "Giovanni A-T-S, Dilletante [sic] Americano." In an atrocious Italian mixed with a bit of English, the full title of the opus read:

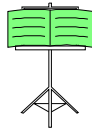
*"Tre Trii, per due Violini and Violoncello, Obligato Dedicati a Sua Eccellenza it Sign G. J. de Heidenstam, Ambasciatore de Sa Maj it Ri de Suede a Constantinopel, Composti a Grand Cairo dal SigrP Giovanni A-T-S. Dilletante Americano. Op. 3. London, Printed & Sold by J. Bland at his Music Warehouse No. 45 Holborn."*

Just exactly who could be an Italian possessing such a cryptic surname and calling himself an "American dilettante?" And, as if this were not enough, to be composing music in Egypt and

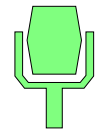
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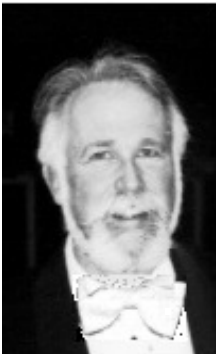
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# New Recordings



## At The Doublebar



As we head into the season of summer music workshops, camps and holidays, I would like to take this opportunity to remind readers that we depend solely on our subscribers and members for our continued existence. As those who

read this column already know, there has been a decline in our membership over the years. Whether this was to be expected is an interesting question. On the one hand, as time passes, it is to be expected that as members age and can no longer play or as they pass away that there will be a decline in existing members. The solution to the decline is to replace losses from natural causes. But this has not been easy, perhaps because of a sea change in attitudes toward music making. When I was younger, it was not uncommon, even for teenagers, to get together to play chamber music on a regular basis for fun. I don't think that happens much any more. Both of my children, now in their 20's are violinists. One is a professional and the other could be if he had so chosen. They played in their grade school and high school orchestras but, other than for state competitions, never made chamber music with their peers. Of course, they played regularly with me and my peers, but not with their own, despite suggestions that they do so. They claimed the other kids simply were not interested. Of course, I am generalizing and I am sure there are many exceptions to this and my experiences are limited to the U.S. But if we are to get new members, it must be from the younger generation. The good news is that they do attend music workshops, camps etc. That being the case, they provide a rich pool of potential new members. Of course, someone has to interest them in us. And that is where those of you who will be attending summer music events come in. We need you to talk to and interest these people. Perhaps the best way is by bringing along some of your favorite "Cobbett" (i.e. not Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart etc) works with you and bringing them out during your sessions. In closing, if you have a renewal notice in your envelope, please renew promptly as your renewals provide our operating funds.—Ray Silvertrust, Editor

A listing of recently recorded non standard chamber music on CD by category.

### String Quartets

Johann ALBRECHTSBERGER (1736-1809) Op.16 Nos.1-6, Hungaroton 32653 / Brian BOYDELL (1917-2000) Nos.1-3, Carducci Classics 8841 / Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941) Fantasy Qt, Dutton Epoch 7254 / Josef Bohuslav FOERSTER (1859-1951) Nos.1-5, Supraphon 4050 / Peter FRIBBINS (1969-) No.1, Guild 7343 / Constantino GAITO (1878-1945) Nos.1-2, Tradition 050416 / Luis GIANNEO (1897-1968) No.3, Tradition 070420 / Philip GLASS (1937) Nos.1-4, Naxos 8.559636 / Vagn HOLMBOE (1909-96) Nos.1-20, Dacapo 8.207001 / Katharine HOOVER (1909-????) Nos.1 & 2, Parnassus 96045 / Miguel Bernal JIMENEZ (1912-56) Cuarteto Virreinal, Luzam 98001 / Viktor KALABIS (1923-2006) Nos.1-7, Praga Digitals 250262 / Erich KORNGOLD (1897-1957) Nos.1-3, Chandos 10611 / David MATTHEWS (1943-) Nos.4, 6 & 10, Toccata 0058 / Javier MONTIEL (1954-) Variations, Luzam 98001 / Manuel PONCE (1882-1948) Estrellita Gavota, Luzam 98001 / David STOCK (1939-) Nos.5-7, Albany Troy 1188 / Ludwig THUILLE (1861-1907) Nos. 1-2, Capriccio 5049 / Eduard TOLDRA (1895-1962) Qt in C & Vistes, Picap 910624 / Donald TOVEY (1875-1940) Aria Op.11, Qt in G, Op. 23, Guild 7346 / Peteris VASKS (1946-) Nos.1-3, Chalolenge Classics 72365 / Leonard VELASQUEZ (1925-) Sinfonia Menestral, Luzam 98001 / G.B. VIOTTI (1755-1824) Nos.1-3, Camerata 28170 / George WALKER (1922-) No.2, Naxos 8.559689 / Mieczyslaw WEINBERG (1919-96) Nos.5, 9 & 14, CPO 777 394 / Felix WEINGARTNER (1863-1942) No.5, CPO 777 252 / Julius WEISMANN (1879-1950) Nos. 4 & 11, CPO 777 596

### Strings Only Not Quartets

Giuseppe CAMBINI (1746-1825) Quintet Nos.1, 4 & 23, Pan Classics 10218 / August KLUGHARDT (1847-1902) Qnt Op.62, MD&G 307-1652 / Jozef KOFFLER (1896-1944) Trio, Channel Classics 31010 / David MATTHEWS (1943-) Trio Nos.1-2, NMC D152 / Ernest SAUTER (1928-) Trio No.3 & Ballad for Trio, ARS 38 492 / William SHIELD (1748-1829) Trio Nos.1-5, Hungaroton 32269 / Felix WEINGARTNER (1863-1942) Qnt, Op.81, CPO 777 252

### Piano Trios

Salvador BROTONS (1959-) Op.39, Picap 90 0064 / Bernard CHMIELARZ (1958-) Trio, Dux 0537 / Petr EBEN (1929-2007) Trio, Hyperion 67730 / Peter FRIBBINS (1969-) Angel Trio, Guild 7343 / Daron HAGEN (1961-) Nos.1-4, Naxos 8.559657 / Hanna KULENTY (1961-) Cradle Song, Dux 0537 / Andrzej

PANUFNIK (1914-91) Trio, Dux 0537 / Ildebrando PIZZETTI (1880-1968) Trio in A, Naxos 8.570875 / Joseph RHEINBERGER (1839-1901) No.2, Centaur 2986 / Ludomir ROZYCKI (1884-1953) Rhapsody Op.33, Dux 0537 / Enrique SANTOS (1930-) No.1, Urtext 191 / Bedrich SMETANA Op.15, Hyperion 67730

### Piano Quartets, Quintets & Sextets

Arnold BAX (1883-1953) Qnt, Naxos 8.572474 / Frank BRIDGE (1879-1941) Qnt, Dutton Epoch 7254 / Alexis de CASTILLON (1838-73) Qt Op.7 & Qnt Op.1, Ligia 0302210 / Peter Maxwell DAVIES (1934-) Qt, Meridian 84586 / Lucien DOROSOR (1878-1955) Qnt, Alpha 164 / August KLUGHARDT (1847-1902) Qnt, Op.43, MD&G 307-1652 / Joseph MARX (1882-1964) Rhapsodie, Scherzo & Ballade for Pno Qt, CPO 777 279 / Dmitri SMIRNOV (1948-) Qt Op.72, Meridian 84586

### Winds & Strings

Peter FRIBBINS (1969-) Clarinet Qnt, Guild 7343 / Franz Anton HOFFMEISTER (1754-1812) 4 Trios for 2 Fl & Vc, Bongiovanni 5163 / Jean Xavier LEFEVRE (1763-1829) 2 Qts for Cln & Str Trio, Tudor 7150 / David MATTHEWS (1943-) Qt for Cln & Str Trio Op.35, NMC D152

### Winds, Strings & Piano

Theodore DUBOIS (1837-1924) Trio for Hrn, Vln & Pno, Albany Troy 1228 / Joseph HOLBROOKE (1874-1959) Trio for Hrn, Vln & Pno, Op.28, Albany Troy 1228 / Peter LIEBERSON (1946) Tashi Qt for Cln, Vln, Vc & Pno, Antares FCR 112 / Gian Carlo MENOTTI (1911-2007) Trio for Cln, Vln & Piano, Champs Hill 005 / Darius MILHAUD (1892-1974) Suite for Cln, Vln & Pno, Op.157b, Naxos 8.572278 / Konstanty REGAMEY (1907-82) Qnt for Cln, Bsn Vln, Vc & Pno, Channel Classics 31010 / Roger REYNOLDS (1934-) Shadowed Narrative for Cln, Vln, Vc & Pno, Antares FCR 112P / Peter WELFFENS (1924-2003) Walking with Eve for Fl, Cln, Vln, Vc & Pno, Phaedra 92060

### Piano & Winds

Willem PIJPER (1894-1947) Sextet, Electera 1407 / Leo SMIT (1900-42) Sextet, Electera 1407

### Winds Only

Charles GOUNOD (1818-93) Petite Symphonie (Nonet), Auris Subtilis 5014-2000 / Theodore GOUVY (1819-98) Octet & Petite Suite Gauloise (Nonet), Auris Subtilis 5014-2000 / Erwin SCHULHOFF (1894-1942) Divertimento for Ob, Cln & Bsn, Ars Musici 232155



# THE WORKS FOR PIANO QUARTET OF JOSEPH MARX *continued from page 3*

changed. For Marx, adhering to his stylistic foundations, which were firmly anchored in the age and art of fin de siècle Habsburg Austria, was a constant renewal of his primal experience of music.

Nonetheless, Marx also immersed himself in music theory, producing two impressive books on the psychology of sound and the nature of tonality (the latter was awarded the Wartinger Prize from Graz University and is considered by many connoisseurs to be one of the most substantial treatises on a topic central to the study of 20th-century musical ideologies).

In 1914, he was appointed professor of theory at the music academy of Vienna University, where he became director in 1922. At the same time, he helped to found the Vienna Musikhochschule, and served as its rector from 1924 to 1927. In Vienna, during the decade of the 1920's, Marx along with Franz Schmidt, was widely regarded as one of Austria's leading composers. But this was in direct opposition to the adherents of the Second Vienna School and Schoenberg's acolytes. Increasingly, he assumed the mantle of Defender of the values of post-romanticism and of the temple of classical craftsmanship.

In 1932 he was commissioned by the President of Turkey, Kemal Ataturk, to set up a music educational system along western lines in the Turkish capital of Ankara. Paul Hindemith continued Marx's works after the latter returned to Vienna in 1934. Marx taught a prodigious number of students, he himself claimed it was more than 1000 over his 43 year career as a teacher. After the Second World War, he composed little more and sadly saw his music, apart from his lieder, fall rapidly out of fashion.

Marx's compositional legacy is quite easy to survey, for he tended to focus on relatively few genres during highly productive periods and avoided both the theatre and liturgical sacred music. Besides his many lieder, he left behind some chamber music, a few piano and organ pieces and six choral works with orchestra. He wrote his most powerful music for large orchestra, and is thus especially remarkable in very small and very large forms. His piano quartets of 1911 were followed in 1913-14 by a second period devoted to chamber music, which witnessed the creation of a large Trio-Fantasy for piano trio, the first of two sonatas for violin and piano in A-major, and a Suite and Pastorale for cello and piano. Between 1936 and 1941 he produced his three string quartets: the Quartetto chromatico, Quartetto in modo antico and Quartetto in modo classico, which usher in a serenity already suggestive of a 'late style'.

## A Styrian's Post-Romantic Impressionism

In music, as in painting, impressionism is primarily viewed as a French phenomenon associated with Claude Debussy, Gabriel Fauré, Maurice Ravel, Paul Dukas, Charles Koechlin, and Florent Schmitt to name but a few. Impressionist compositions are noted for their constant changes of timbre, their frequently unstable harmonies, enharmonic modulations, whole-tone scales, augmented triads, an avoidance of traditional structural conventions, dilution of classical counterpoint, modality, and moments of blurred and unpredictably flowing textures, rhythms and meters. All this went

hand in hand with a deeper exploration of the potential and artful combination of timbres, an increasingly subtle use of advanced harmonies and iridescent colors.

Of course, impressionism deeply affected composers of other lands. Among the Italians, for example, there are Ottorino Respighi, Ildebrando Pizzetti, Gian Francesco Malipiero, and Alfredo Casella. Among the Russians Alexander Scriabin and Nikolai Tcherepnin. England had Frederick Delius and Ralph Vaughan Williams. In Poland there was Karol Szymanowski, in Spain Manuel de Falla, in Brazil Heitor Villa-Lobos, and in Austria, among the leading proponents, there were Joseph Marx and Theodor Berger).

Still, for all the similarities in their opulent refinement of sound, a sharp distinction is perceivable between French impressionism, with its aspiration toward immeasurable lightness and its unmistakable emphasis on the ever-adventurous and exploration, and Marx, who drew primarily on the tradition of post-Bachian counterpoint and the harmonies and thematic manipulation of post-Beethovenian and Wagnerian romanticism. The stolidity and metaphysical gravitas of the Germanic tradition stands almost diametrically opposed to the flexibility and weightlessness of the shimmering, gossamer world of French impressionism. This opposition is very apparent in the music of Marx.

## The Piano Quartets

The success of his lieder, emboldened Marx to try his hand at more challenging areas of composition. The year 1911 was the first he devoted entirely to chamber music. It was then that he wrote his three works for piano quartet: one in the Form of a Rhapsody, a second as a massive Scherzo and the third as a Ballad. Though the titles more or less suggest smaller, contained works, in fact these are sizeable compositions laid out on a symphonic scale. All are set in large forms; if he had added some sort of finale they might have formed a four-part cycle, a sort of powerful 80-minute symphony for piano quartet. The fact that the writing for all of the instruments is so astonishingly good is no accident, given that he was proficient on each of them.

All piano quartets are dominated by a dark, viscous inflection, densely written and drenched in tonal color, blending the heterogeneous sounds of piano and strings with amazing dexterity. Though their designs proceed from the dualistic structural contrasts of sonata form, the mood as a whole is strikingly fluid and continuous. Rather than a Beethovenian confrontation of antithetical universes, it is more the case that everything seems interwoven with everything else and mutually reflected on multiple levels. This places Marx in close proximity to Max Reger. But Marx's music, unlike Reger's, is shot through with ameliorating harmonies and the contrapuntal workmanship of Brahms. The result is a confluence of post-romanticism, with hints of the density and ecstatic Jugendstil expressionism. The three Piano Quartets of 1911 demonstrate that it was an ensemble in which Marx felt entirely at home, and also show that he was familiar with the broader repertoire for the this combination.

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

The **Rhapsody for Piano Quartet in A Major** gathers together four nearly inextricable sonata movements into a mighty edifice that flows organically from one to the other. We find seemingly never-ending lyric episodes that recklessly exploit and overstrain the capacity of the small ensemble. Spacious counterpoint and rustically liting dance rhythms characterize this ambitious and monumental work. The nature of the writing is quickly apparent in the first section, shortly after the quiet introduction where all four instruments join together, creating a massive "tonal wall" approaching the orchestral in its imposing power, as the example directly below so clearly indicates.

4

**A** *Ziemlich breit*

*a tempo* *mit breitem Strich*

*ff* *sempre marc.* *sempre ff*

*sempre ff*

*Luftpause* *belebend* *schwungvoll*

*a tempo* *mf cresc.* *f*

*mp cresc.* *f*

*mp cresc.* *f*

*a tempo* *ff* *mp* *cresc.* *ff*

*belebend* *hervortreten* *marcato* *f marcato*

*hervortreten* *f marcato*

*hervortreten* *decresc.* *cresc.*

(Continued on page 8)

**Rasch und heimlich.**

Violino. *pizz.* *mp*

Viola. *pizz.* *mp*

Violoncello. *arco* *non pizz.*

Piano. *mp*

*arco*

*breit streichen*

*arco*

*breit streichen*

*markirt.*

*mf* *cresc.*

*non legato*

*f*

*f*

*f*

*cresc.*

*marcato*

The Scherzo in d-minor for Piano Quartet is laid out on a similarly lavish scale that is best measured against the yardstick of a few fully-fledged symphonic scherzos of the late and post-romantic eras (Bruckner Mahler and Schmidt). Even within the main scherzo section the contrasts are so pronounced that the brief, surprisingly simple trio section in B-flat major comes as a genuine surprise, followed by a repeat of the mighty scherzo minus its long opening section. Both works sound like symphonic testaments pruned down to chamber format and squeezed into the small instrumental ensemble. The opening bars of the Scherzo with its tinkling piano part, is as good an example as one could get in illustrating Marx's brand of impressionism.

Viewed in this light, the work which can best be considered written in a true chamber music style both in its synthesis of content and form, is the **Ballad for Piano Quartet in a-minor**. It also

is the work which most closely approximates the dualistic structural principle of sonata form. The main theme originated in Marx's study of Bachian counterpoint, its evocative and wide-ranging inflection now enmeshed in the unfulfilled longings of post-romanticism. (Example below)

Violoncello. *cresc.* *cresc.*

At first, it is prolonged in the manner of a contemplative, circumambulating fugue. Much conspicuous counterpoint and motivic development (augmentation, combination of themes, motivic derivation) serve as a centripetal pole in the undulating narrative flux of musical figures.

All three of these works definitely belong in the concert hall. It must be admitted that the Rhapsody and Scherzo can almost be considered concerti for Piano Quartet and that all three make technical demands on the players. But one need not, by any means, be a virtuoso to play these fine works, though it is fair to say that only amateurs of an advanced technical level will be able to scale the heights of emotion and drama presented. All three works are in print and were recently recorded by CPO.



## Antes: 3 Trios for 2 Violins and Cello *(continued from page 3)*

dedicating it to a Swedish ambassador in Constantinople? Clearly, this was a tantalizing riddle; it remained unsolved until 1941. In that year a copy of the curious edition was advertised by Otto Haas, a leading dealer of rare music in London. Quite obviously neither Haas nor the American buyer, the Eastman School of Music, knew the identity of the mysterious composer. Fortunately, the Haas catalog also reached the desk of the New York Public Library's music division. It was Carleton Sprague Smith, former chief of the division, who was the first to suspect that "Giovanni A-T-S" was in reality none other than the first American missionary in Egypt, John Antes.

John Antes (1740-1811) was born of a second-generation German American family in Frederick, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. He was reared in the same God-fearing tradition as other Pennsylvania German farmers' sons of the day. His father had been a leader in his church (German Reformed) and had also been a leader in a movement to unify many of the divergent denominations in the Colony. When his mission failed, he joined with the Moravian Brethren who had moved in to strive for the same purpose.

Antes received the customary classical education in the Moravian boys' school at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, which he entered in 1752. He evidently revealed at an early age an unusual talent for precision craftsmanship, for he made a violin, certainly one of the earliest violins made in America, in 1759. Several years later, he also made a viola and a cello. The violin and viola are still in performing condition.

Not long after this he emigrated to Germany. We know that from 1765 to 1769, he was an apprentice watchmaker at the Moravian town of Neuwied on the Rhine. In 1769, he was ordained into the Moravian ministry and was sent to Egypt to serve as a missionary, the first American missionary to be stationed there. His missionary service was fraught with intolerable hardships and peril, climaxed by a ruthless flogging and imprisonment by an extortionist. While convalescing from this harrowing experience, Antes turned to composing music, the most important product of this period being his Three Trios for 2 Violins and Violoncello, Op. 3.

His health seriously impaired by his torture, Antes was obliged to return to Europe in 1781. Several years later he assumed the post of business manager of the Moravian Congregation at Fulneck, England, and remained at this post for twenty-five years, until he and his wife retired to Bristol in 1808 where he died in 1811.

His career had been particularly unusual, for it included service as a missionary, a watchmaker, an inventor, a violinmaker, a theoretician, and a business administrator, as well as of a composer; and he was personally known to at least two famous musicians-Franz Joseph Haydn and Johann Peter Salomon.

Nearly all of Antes' known compositions, some twenty-five sacred anthems and arias and twelve chorales date from the last years of the eighteenth century. They were created for one purpose only: to be the sincere contribution of a humble and devout man to the service of his church. In no way were they to bring glory to the composer. Antes himself considered his works to be

the efforts of a dilettante, i.e. an amateur, not as finished creations of a professional composer. As a creative artist, his work was influenced principally by Haydn and to a lesser extent by Handel, whose anthems and choruses were still captivating English audiences even though the composer had long since been laid to rest.

We do not know the exact date of composition of his Op.3 trios, but it is safe to say that it was sometime between 1770 and 1781. Moravian scholars place it during his convalescence which dates it more specifically to 1779-1781. The trios were published by Bland around 1790 and we find in Haydn's diaries for 1791-92 references to a Mr Antis (sic), an English composer. It is most probable that Antes used Haydn's own trios for two violins and cello, of which there are some twenty six, for his models. But Antes' trios differ from those of Haydn in at least one important way: the cello is treated as an "obligato, rather than as a fundamental basso. In each trio, the three instruments are on nearly equal terms. The cello, and not just the violins, is given the chance to lead and introduce thematic material as the opening Allegro to Trio No.2 illustrates:

Allegro

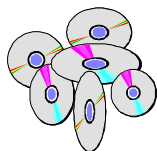
The musical score shows the beginning of the first movement, 'Allegro', for Trio No. 2. It consists of three staves: two violins and one cello. The cello part is marked 'Solo' and 'dolce'. The music is in 3/4 time and begins with a series of eighth and sixteenth notes in the cello, followed by the violins.

One finds no instance of this from Austro-German composers until Mozart's Divertimento which was not composed until more than a decade later. In fact, only Boccherini and Giardini, and perhaps one or two other Italians, had treated the cello in their trios in such a fashion, and Boccherini, of course, because he was a cellist. This equality of parts was made possible by frequent shifting of the theme and accompaniment between the voices. The best example of this is perhaps found in the *Andante* of Trio No.2. There, the thematic material is cut into segments, exchanged and imitated by the violins and cello.

Andante un poco adagio

The musical score shows the beginning of the second movement, 'Andante un poco adagio'. It consists of three staves: two violins and one cello. The music is in 3/4 time and features a variety of dynamics including piano (p), rinforzando (rinf.), and mezzo-piano ((p)). The thematic material is exchanged between the instruments.

In addition, the nuances of dynamics show that Antes had moved away from the so-called "Galant" style which was still in vogue and used by most of his contemporaries. The works are in print and certainly make a valuable addition to this thin repertoire.



## Diskology: Benjamin Godard's Piano Trios String Trios by Ferdinand Hiller and Carl Reinecke



**Benjamin Godard** (1849-95) was born in Paris. He studied composition at the Paris Conservatoire with Reber and violin with Henri Vieuxtemps. He was somewhat of a prodigy on that instrument, as well as on the viola, and accompanied Vieuxtemps to Germany on concert tours on two occasions. Godard enjoyed chamber music and played in several performing ensembles. This experience stood him good stead when it came to writing effective chamber music compositions. In 1878, Godard was the co-winner with Théodore Du-

bois, head of the Paris Conservatory, of a musical competition instituted by the city of Paris. He composed music with great facility and from 1878 to time until his death Godard composed a surprisingly large number of works, including the opera *Jocelyn*, from which the famous "Berceuse" has become perhaps his best known work. He also composed several symphonic works, ballets, concertos, overtures and chamber music, including two piano trios. Both are recorded on **MD&G CD 303 1015**.

**Piano Trio No.1 in g minor, Op.32** dates from 1880 and for many years enjoyed considerable popularity. The restless, opening *Allegro* begins with a turbulent theme in which the piano is given a fast running passage softly played beneath the longer-lined melody in the strings. A second theme is quieter and of a reflective nature. The following *Tempo di Minuetto* is not a minuet but a bouncy, highly accented scherzo. The middle section has a Russian orthodox church-like melody which is cleverly interrupted by the sprightly first theme after almost every utterance, creating an original effect. The third movement, *Andante*, is a simple but beautiful lovers' duet. First the violin calls out, then the cello answers. Eventually, they join in and sing together. The finale, *Allegro*, follows without pause. It begins with the same turbulent theme that began the trio, although in a slightly altered form. Godard actually brings back each of the earlier themes from the preceding movements, but ingeniously clothes them in a quite different guise. **Piano Trio No.2 in F Major, Op.72** was composed in 1884. It clearly shows his ability to write in a dramatic vein while at the same time showcasing his considerable lyrical talent which his contemporaries constantly praised. The opening movement *Allegro moderato* begins with the strings singing a cantabile melody over the syncopated resistance in the piano. The harmonic writing is very sophisticated. The tender melody of the second movement, *Adagio*, creates a sunny mood which is only briefly interrupted by a few shadows in the middle section. The playful *Vivace* with its warbling birdsong serves as a scherzo. The dotted rhythm and swelling melody of the stormy finale, *Allegro vivace*, gives the music an almost Hungarian flavor. These are both very appealing works which deserve to be played in concert as well as in amateur circles. Fortunately, the parts are in print. This is a highly recommended CD.

**ARS CD 38 491** presents two string trios virtually unknown and rarely, if ever, played. In the case of **Carl Reinecke** (1824-1910)

this is truly unjust because his **String Trio in c minor, Op.249** is one of the finest ever composed. Nowadays, Reinecke has been all but forgotten, but he was one of the finest concert pianists of the 19th century. As a conductor, he helped turn the Leipzig Gewandhaus into an orchestra with few if any peers. And under his directorship, the Leipzig Conservatory became what was widely regarded as the finest in the world. As a teacher of composition and of piano, he was considered to have few if any equals. Among his many students were Grieg, Bruch, Janacek, Albeniz, Sinding, Svendsen, Reznicek, Delius, Arthur Sullivan, George Chadwick, Ethel Smyth, and Felix Weingartner. I rarely comment on performance as that is not the purpose of this column but the players here seem to have little affinity for the trio. There is a far better recording on MD&G 634 0841.

In 1898 at the age of 74, Reinecke wrote what is arguably the greatest late romantic string trio. Unlike many of his contemporaries, such as Bruch, Reinecke was able to move beyond the music of Mendelssohn and Schumann, the musical idols of the mid 19 Century. This string trio is infused with the developments of late, and even Post-Brahmsian, romanticism. The writing is very contrapuntal and original. The dark and brooding opening *Allegro moderato* is painted on a large canvas. It shows a wide range of emotion and richness of tonality, The three voices often sound like four. The *Andante* which follows is a theme and set of variations, beginning with a naive, quiet melody. The very brief third movement, *Intermezzo, Vivace ma non troppo*, is a heavily syncopated scherzo with an interestingly contrasting middle section which illustrates Reinecke employing the new directions of Post-Brahmsian tonality. The big finale, *Adagio, ma non troppo lento,—Allegro un poco maestoso*, begins as a lyrical and highly romantic lied. The thematic material of the *Allegro* is brighter but still densely scored, once again creating a wealth of sound which belies the fact that only a trio is playing.



**Ferdinand Hiller** (1811-1885) first studied piano and violin in his native Frankfurt. His talent was such that he was taken to study with Johann Nepomuk Hummel, then the greatest living pianist. For more than 2 decades he was one of Mendelssohn's closest friends, succeeding him as conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He served as a Professor and Director of the Cologne Conservatory for several decades. Among his many students was Max Bruch. Hiller's vast musical output is more or less forgotten. It contained works in virtually every genre. His **String Trio in C Major, Op.207** was published in 1886, the year after his death. It is a decent but certainly not a great work, which suffers comparison by being on the same disk as the Reinecke. However, the players seem to have a much greater feel for the Hiller than the Reinecke. It can be said that while the trio is well written, the thematic material is rather pedestrian and unmemorable. The opening *Allegro con fuoco* seems mistitled, as the music cannot be described as fiery

## Six Wind Quintets and 3 Octets by Josef Mysliveček A String Quartet by Joseph Haas & A Piano Quintet by Egon Kornauth

or passionate. It is straight forward, uncomplicated and somewhat boring because of the thin melodic material. Next comes an *Andante*, a theme and set of variations. These are quite well-done, and were the other movements as fine, we would have a different overall verdict. A charming Intermezzo with considerable appeal follows. The finale, a *Presto*, suffers from the same problems as the first movement but they are not as pronounced. Recommended with some reservations.



**Josef Mysliveček** (1737–1781) was born in Prague and like his father before him became a master miller before studying music with a number of teachers, first in Prague and then in Venice. Unlike most composers of that era, Mysliveček refused to work directly by any noble, prelate, or ruler and earned his living solely through teaching, performing, and composing. From 1763 on, he mainly lived in Italy, where he became a

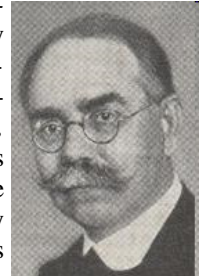
highly successful composer of opera. He wrote in virtually every genre and must be counted among those composers who made important contributions to the formation of late eighteenth-century classicism. During the 1770-s, the Mozarts, while on tour in Italy, struck up a close friendship with him and his compositions influenced Wolfgang's then emerging early style.

The fact that all six of his wind quintets and his two octets appear on one CD **CPO CD 777 377** attests to the fact that these are not lengthy works. In fact, they are rather short; the Quintets only average four to five minutes in length, the octets are 8, 10 and 15 minutes in duration. The quintets were all composed at the same time and appeared as **Six Quintet for 2 Oboes, 2 Horns and Bassoon**. They are all in three movements, mostly fast—slow—fast. The use of two horns is quite striking and give the quintets, in their faster movements a military aura. The technical level required of the players, while not requiring virtuosi, is certainly above the level one finds in similar works from this era. The more substantial octets are also more interesting. They appear to be for 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets, 2 Horns and 2 Bassoons and Double Bass but the jacket notes do not make this clear. They were composed during the 1770's and are among the composer's mature compositions. **Octet No.3 in B flat Major** is the longest of the three and must be singled out for it sounds very much like Mozart's own works for large wind ensembles, in particular his Serenades K.361, 375 and 388, which were composed after Mysliveček's. The music on disk is engaging enough to interest all music fans of this period and not just wind players who should not miss this recommended CD.

**Joseph Haas** (1879-1960) was born in the Bavarian town of Mairhingen. Although he trained and worked as a school teacher, he wanted a career in music, and eventually took private lessons from Max Reger, then later at the Leipzig Conservatory. His success as a composer led to his becoming a professor at the Stuttgart Conservatory and then later in Munich. Among his many students were Eugen Jochum, Wolfgang Sawallisch, Karl Höller and Karl Amadeus Hartmann. Haas, like Reger, never abandoned

tonality and many of his works, such as this String Quartet, are richly tonal though in an updated way. Haas wrote in most genres and left a number of chamber music works.

The first work on **Cavalli Records CD 276** is Haas' **String Quartet in A Major, Op.50** was published in 1919. The main theme of the first movement, *Frisch und lebendig* (fresh and lively) first brought forth by the viola is indeed memorable. The entire movement is charming and the writing is of the highest quality. The second movement, *Menuetartig, nicht zu rasch* (Like a minuet, not too quick) is richly scored with many inventive ideas. The third movement, *Sehr langsam und ruhig* (Very slow and calm) is of a different nature. It begins with a folk melody and then is followed by several sections, each with a different mood and tempo—there is a broad lyrical interlude followed by a waltz-like episode, then a rousing two-step, then a lyrical elegiac folksong, and then an intermezzo. The finale, *Sehr lebhaft* (Very lively) is full of good spirits, there is an especially charming rondo and a highly effective coda. This is a first rate early modern work, completely tonal, which would surely be a success in concert but is not beyond experienced amateurs. The parts are in print.



The second work on disk is the **Piano Quintet, Op.35a** by **Egon Kornauth** (1891-1959).

Born in Olomouc (then Olmutz) he made his public debut as a pianist and cellist at an early age, and then studied composition at the Conservatory in Vienna with Robert Fuchs, among others. In 1912 Kornauth received the Austrian State Prize for his Sonata for viola and piano, op. 3 and in 1929 the Artistic Prize of the City of Vienna. Yet both he and his music remained relatively unknown due to two factors. The first was that much of his life was not only spent outside of Europe, but in "nowhere land." Kornauth accepted an offer to establish an orchestra in Sumatra and then spent several years traveling throughout the island with the Vienna Trio. He also spent a number of years touring with them in Brazil. But perhaps the more important factor was, as he put it in his own words: *"I am aware that my oeuvre was in no way trendsetting; I hardly sought new paths; logic and perfection were more important to me than difficulty; I have never shied away from simplicity, but rather even preferred it. My modest ambition was to compose works that would not be unworthy to be heard alongside the masterworks. Thus my works were never in any way 'sensational' and thus could hardly ever cause a stir."* His Piano Quintet dates from 1931, but was only published twenty years later. The most striking feature of the three-movement work is its broad soaring lines. This is particularly true of the dark melancholy first movement, *Allegro moderato*. The thickly woven texture of the string writing is definitive of the character of the entire quintet. The piano is frequently given merely a harmonically supporting accompaniment function. The broad second move-



# String Quartets by Johann Joseph Abert and Anton Gatscha A Trio for Clarinet, Viola and Piano from Heinrich Kaspar Schmid

ment *Notturmo* evokes the Viennese Modernism from around the turn of the nineteenth century. Only in the powerful opening of the lyrical but dramatic finale does the piano momentarily take over the melodic development. This works combines the expressivity of Modernism with the clear external form of the nineteenth century. A highly recommended CD.



On a CD, **Ars 38 465**, entitled Musik aus Stuttgart, we come across the **String Quartet in A Major, Op.25** by **Johann Joseph Abert** (1932-1915). Abert studied double bass and composition at the Prague Conservatory and obtained a position as a bassist in the Stuttgart Hofkapelle under Peter Lindpainter's baton, whom he succeeded. Although he wrote in most genres, he was best known for his operas. The String Quartet in A Major dates from 1862. And

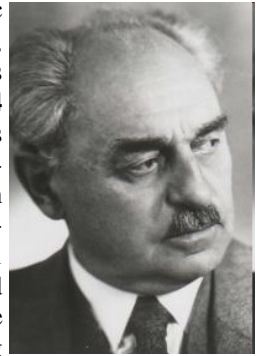
shows the influence of Schumann and Mendelssohn without exactly sounding like either of them. In the first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, there is much bustling but the thematic material is unmemorable to say the least. Better is the *Adagio* which follows for the very reason the first movement was not. Its lyrical main theme is competently treated and a slinky chromatic, second theme, a duet between the first violin and cello is quite effective and original. Here the writing rises well above average. Next comes a *Scherzo*. Again there is a lot of rhythmic activity but a dearth of melody. The same could be said of the finale, *Allegro*. I see no reason to revive this work or obtain the CD.



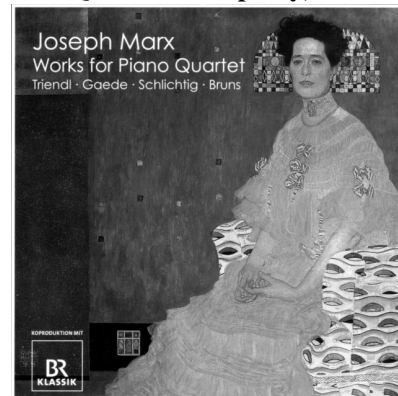
While Abert and his quartet did not escape the attention of the standard references such as Cobbett's Cyclopaedia or Altmann's Handbuch, **Anton Gatscha** (1882-1922) certainly did. It is unlikely that anyone outside of Austria, unless they have purchased **ORF CD 072001A5020**, has ever heard of him. Yet, his **String Quartet in F Major, Op.6**, subtitled *Das Leben, ein Traum* (life is but a dream) is certainly far more worthy to be heard than

Abert's. Of course, they are from completely different eras. Born at Langendorf Castle on the Schwarzenberg estate in Bohemia—his father was an accountant and grounds keeper—he was educated in Vienna taking doctorate in philosophy and then worked as a college teacher. At the same, he studied composition at the Vienna Conservatory with Robert Fuchs. The Quartet is in the neo romantic style. The first movement, *Allegro*, opens confidently, a little playfully *a la Haydn*, and in keeping with the musical motto "Life Is But a Dream." In essence tuneful, the music begins to wax rhapsodic but still within the confines of a carefully crafted atmosphere befitting Brahms. Movements two and three show some influence of Mahler in their unhurried, a moderate dancing quality. The last movement *Allegretto grazioso con variazione* begins delicately: It is a variation movement in the traditional sense. This is a rather good work, well worth hearing and I think playing if the parts are in print. Recommended.

I have not heard a great deal of the music of **Heinrich Kaspar Schmid** (1874-1953), but what little I've heard, I've thought was first rate. The **Trio in g minor, Op.114 for Clarinet, Viola and Piano** which is recorded on **CPO CD 777 391** is not exception. Schmid was born in the Bavarian town of Landau. As a boy he studied music with his father who was a school teacher and choral conductor. He entered the Munich Akademie der Tonkunst where he studied composition with Ludwig Thuille. In 1905 he was obtained a teaching appointment there and in 1919 was promoted to a full professor. After World War I, Schmid pursued a career as a performer and composer, touring throughout Austria, Scandinavia, and Russia. In 1921 he became director of the Karlsruhe Conservatory and later the Augsburg Conservatory. The Trio dates from 1944. In my opinion, it must be considered one of the most important modern works in a long line of compositions for this evocative ensemble which date back to Schumann. It is in four movements, the first of which is quite substantial. In the powerful opening *Allegro appassionato* the viola explodes forth, immediately riveting the listener's attention. For almost a minute, it sounds like a viola concerto, then the clarinet enters in similar fashion. When the passion dissipates, more lyrical episodes follow. The writing for each of the instruments is absolutely wonderful. Even if the other three movements were mediocre—and they are not—this would be a valuable addition to this repertoire. The very short second movement, *Vivo molto*, is a quirky scherzo dominated by its rhythms and chromaticism. Next comes a dark, ruminative Brahmsian *Adagio non troppo*. The finale, *Vivace*, with its pounding piano rhythm creates a sense of urgency to the lovely melody found in the clarinet and viola. Much forward motion and excitement carry the music forward effortless. I found this trio left nothing to be desired. I think it qualifies for the term masterpiece. Certainly any Clarinet, Viola and Piano ensemble ought to include this on their concert programs, but there is nothing technically about this fine piece work which would exclude amateurs from enjoying it. I believe the music is print. Highly recommended. (The rest of the music on disk is various instrumental sonatas by Schmid)



There is no point in discussing **Josef Marx's** three works for Piano Quartet—**Rhapsody, Scherzo** and **Ballad**—since Mr.



Weinzinger's article on them appears in this issue. Nonetheless, it is worth drawing your attention to the fact that they were recently recorded **CPO CD# 777 279**. The performance is first rate and the works ought to occupy an important place in the piano quartet repertoire. Well-worth hearing. A highly recommended CD.

## A Piano Quintet by Georgy Catoire

### Anton Titz's String Quartets for the Imperial Court of St. Petersburg



**Georgy Catoire** (1861-1926) is generally considered the father of Russian modernism. He was born in Moscow to a French noble family which had emigrated to Russia in the early 19th century. Although fascinated by music, he studied mathematics and science at the University of Moscow, graduating in 1884. After graduation, however, he decided to devote himself to music. His early compositions showed the influence of Tchaikovsky who described Catoire as talented but in need of serious training. Eventually Catoire was to study composition with Rimsky-Korsakov, Lyadov, Arensky and Taneyev. In 1916, he was appointed Professor of Composition at the Moscow Conservatory, a position he held for the rest of his life. Catoire wrote several treatises on music theory, which became the foundation for the teaching of music theory in Russia. His composition style was a synthesis of Russian, German and French influences--Tchaikovsky, Chopin, Cesar Franck, Debussy and Richard Wagner were the chief influences. From them, Catoire developed a highly personal and original idiom. His championing of Wagner is partially responsible for the fact that his works are relatively unknown today. Rimsky-Korsakov's circle disliked Wagner's music intensely and did little to promote it. This resulted in its being barely known in Russia. They also shunned Catoire's music because he was a Wagnerite. Catoire's **Piano Quintet, Op.28**, recorded on **Aliud CD# HN 033** was his penultimate chamber music work. Composed in 1914, it is quite individualistic and original sounding. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, begins with a theme which briefly recalls Tchaikovsky's piano trio. It is quite romantic and developed in a dramatic fashion. The second theme is more delicate and introspective. The second movement, *Andante*, begins in a somewhat mystical vein. Quiet, the music floats in a gauze-like dream world. The opening to the finale, *Allegro con spirito e capriccioso*, begins with musical images of a fairyland complete with elves dancing and an aura of magic. But as the movement progresses, many dramatic episodes bubble forth. There is no point denying that this is not an easy work to play and, from an ensemble standpoint, it is probably beyond all but the most advanced amateurs. Still, it is an interesting work which deserves to be heard in concert. Recommended.

**Anton Ferdinand Titz** (1742-1810 the name is variously spelled Tietz, Ditz, Dietz) was born in Nuremberg. He studied the violin, reaching a very high degree of proficiency. Not much is known about his early life other than the fact that he moved to Vienna where he met Gluck whom he befriended. Thanks to Gluck, Titz was engaged as a violinist in the court orchestra and became a regular performer at Prince Lobkowitz's soirees. It was at one of these that the Russian diplomat Pyotr Soymonov heard him play and invited him to St. Petersburg, to which Titz traveled in 1771. Once there, he became a chamber musician for Catharine the Great and was concertmaster of the Imperial Orchestra. In addition to his service in the orchestra, Titz also taught the violin to Catherine's grandson and successor Grand Duke Alexander. Titz doubtlessly had a talent for teaching; at any rate in the case of the grand duke, he was able to turn his student into a capable violinist good enough to play in the Imperial Orchestra. Titz did not become a soloist due to stage fright. However, as a leader of the Imperial String Quartet, an ensemble which he himself introduced to Catherine, he was in his element. His leadership was such that he was able to stimulate considerable interest in chamber music not only at court but among the Russian aristocracy. Spohr, while touring St. Petersburg in 1802-1803 met Titz. In his memoirs he wrote "Titz is not a great violinist and even less so the best of all times, as his admirers would have us believe, but he is without a doubt a musical genius, as his compositions abundantly prove." Titz was 60 when Spohr met him and few violinists are at the top of their game at that age. Titz died in St. Petersburg in 1810. Most of his compositions consist of chamber music, of which only his string quartets were ever published.

On **Profil CD Nos PH06032 and PH09046** eight of Titz's string quartets are recorded. The earliest quartets are a set of Six Quartets, composed in 1781 and published that year in Vienna. They were dedicated to Prince Golitzin, the Russian ambassador to Vienna from 1761 to 1792 and one of Mozart's patrons. A set of Three Quartets was published in 1802 and a second set of Three Quartets was published in 1808. The 1802 Quartets are dedicated to his former student, the newly crowned Tsar Alexander I. On PH06032 we find Quartet Nos. 4 & 5 from the 1781 quartets along with Nos.1 & 3 from 1802. On PH09046 are Nos. 3 & 6 from 1781, No.2 from 1802 and No.1 from 1808. Not surprisingly, given Titz's background, the Six Quartets were influenced by early Viennese classicism. Two of these already exhibit four movements, with one brisk movement at both the beginning and end, a minuet with a trio followed by a slow movement, all characteristic of later classicism. Titz wrote them for his string quartet at the Imperial Court in Petersburg. They are the first to be composed in Russia, albeit by a German. In this second set, Titz varied the sequence of movements, while remaining within the framework of the classical form. What is quite striking about these quartets is the equality of writing for the various voices, in particular the cello which is given copious solos and opportunities of presenting the thematic material. The only modern edition of his quartets is that of **String Quartet No.1 in G Major** from the 1808 set which appeared in 2000. I have played it and found it quite good. The main theme of the first movement recalls Mozart's Violin Concerto No.3 of the same key. Despite the fact that the use period instruments, in my opinion, somewhat mars the recording, unless you like listening to Mozart quartets on period instruments, these are recommended CDs.



ist good enough to play in the Imperial Orchestra. Titz did not become a soloist due to stage fright. However, as a leader of the Imperial String Quartet, an ensemble which he himself introduced to Catherine, he was in his element. His leadership was such that he was able to stimulate considerable interest in chamber music not only at court but among the Russian aristocracy. Spohr, while touring St. Petersburg in 1802-1803 met Titz. In his memoirs he wrote "Titz is not a great violinist and even less so the best of all times, as his admirers would have us believe, but he is without a doubt a musical genius, as his compositions abundantly prove." Titz was 60 when Spohr met him and few violinists are at the top of their game at that age. Titz died in St. Petersburg in 1810. Most of his compositions consist of chamber music, of which only his string quartets were ever published.

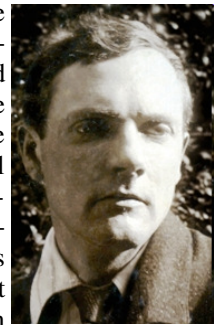
On **Profil CD Nos PH06032 and PH09046** eight of Titz's string quartets are recorded. The earliest quartets are a set of Six Quartets, composed in 1781 and published that year in Vienna. They were dedicated to Prince Golitzin, the Russian ambassador to Vienna from 1761 to 1792 and one of Mozart's patrons. A set of Three Quartets was published in 1802 and a second set of Three Quartets was published in 1808. The 1802 Quartets are dedicated to his former student, the newly crowned Tsar Alexander I. On PH06032 we find Quartet Nos. 4 & 5 from the 1781 quartets along with Nos.1 & 3 from 1802. On PH09046 are Nos. 3 & 6 from 1781, No.2 from 1802 and No.1 from 1808. Not surprisingly, given Titz's background, the Six Quartets were influenced by early Viennese classicism. Two of these already exhibit four movements, with one brisk movement at both the beginning and end, a minuet with a trio followed by a slow movement, all characteristic of later classicism. Titz wrote them for his string quartet at the Imperial Court in Petersburg. They are the first to be composed in Russia, albeit by a German. In this second set, Titz varied the sequence of movements, while remaining within the framework of the classical form. What is quite striking about these quartets is the equality of writing for the various voices, in particular the cello which is given copious solos and opportunities of presenting the thematic material. The only modern edition of his quartets is that of **String Quartet No.1 in G Major** from the 1808 set which appeared in 2000. I have played it and found it quite good. The main theme of the first movement recalls Mozart's Violin Concerto No.3 of the same key. Despite the fact that the use period instruments, in my opinion, somewhat mars the recording, unless you like listening to Mozart quartets on period instruments, these are recommended CDs.

## Two String Quartets & A Wind Quintet from Otto Tichy A Piano Trio and A Piano Qt by Donald Tovey / Johann Gross String Qt No.3



Born in Martinkov, Moravia now part of the Czech Republic but then part of Habsburg Austria **Otto Tichy** (1890-1973) studied composition at the Prague Conservatory with Vitezslav Novak and then continued his studies in Paris at the Schola Cantorum with Vincent d'Indy. Between 1926-36, he taught in Switzerland and then returned to Prague eventually becoming a professor at the Conservatory, a position he held from 1945-65. While mostly known for his religious music, Tichy composed a fair amount of chamber music.

Gall CD 1111 presents his **String Quartet No.1** in e flat minor, written in 1924 in Paris. It reveals the influence of his teacher, d'Indy but also has vague folkloric elements. The overall feel is a fusion of French impressionism with late German romanticism. The opening movement, *Moderato, vivo ma non tanto*, begins in very dramatic fashion. The tonalities, for the most part, are very conservative for the time, more late 19th century than early 20th and certainly not as advanced as d'Indy's later quartets. The charming second movement, *Allegretto*, in the main is a gentle intermezzo. But here one can here Novak's influence and Tichy's Czech background. This can be heard again in the short *Andante* which follows. The playful finale, *Rondo allegro scherzando*, again sounds more Central European than French although there are a few tonal passages in which d'Indy could have heard his influence upon the composer. While there is nothing ground-breaking about the quartet, it nonetheless is well-written and quite appealing and probably fun to play. Also on disk are the **Four Miniatures for Wind Quintet** which date from 1949. As the title suggests, these are short pieces, none over two minutes duration. They consist of a lovely, calm *Andante*, a lazy, dreamy *Moderato*, an upbeat, bouncy *Allegretto* and surprisingly, a sedate *Largo* to conclude. These are entirely tonal with pleasant traditional melodies. Although they are mere trifles, they are very well done, appealing and certainly deserve performance. The last chamber work on disk is his **Quartetino on Popular Moravian Folksongs**, written in Prague in 1963. The four movements of the Quartetino—a bright *Allegretto*, a sweet *Lento*, a jovial *Allegro scherzando* and a bustling *Allegro ma non troppo*—are not as short as the Four Miniatures for Wind Quintet, but none of them last over 4 minutes. The folk songs are clearly discernible and are very effectively set against pleasant accompaniments. Tichy clearly had no use for serialism or atonality and was not even attracted to trying to stretch the limits of tonality as several other tonal composers such as his countryman Bohuslav Martinu or Karl Weigl had to name but two. In fact, his own teachers were tonally more adventurous than he, if the selections on this CD are anything to go by. While I would not say that his music is reactionary, because there are clearly definable elements of modernity to found, they are so tastefully handled that they do not sound as such. Clearly, Tichy's elementary conservatism must have resulted in the marginalization of his works which are very pleasing to hear and to play. I have no idea if they are in print. This is a recommended CD



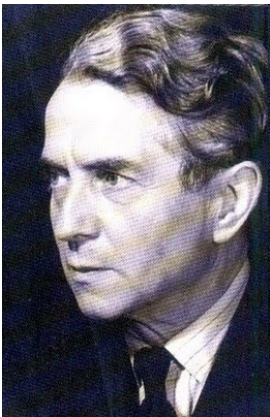
**Donald Tovey** (1875-1940) was born in the English town of Eton. He studied piano privately and subsequently attended Oxford and the Royal Academy of Music in London where he studied composition with Hubert Parry. He enjoyed a career as a concert performer as well as a composer and served as a Professor of Music for more than 25 years at Edinburgh University. Today he is best remembered for his essays on music, but he regarded himself first and foremost as a composer. Tovey wrote in most genres and his compositions were not only respected but regularly performed in such important venues as London, Vienna and Berlin. But like the works of so many others, it has inexplicably disappeared from the concert stage. He wrote several chamber music works, most dating from the last decade of the 19th century up to the First World War. **Guild CD 7352** presents two of these. The first is his **Piano Quartet in e minor, Op.12**. It was composed in 1900 but was not published until 12 years later. It is dedicated to one of his tutors at Oxford, Henry Joachim, a nephew of the famous violinist. It is only in two movements, but these are of considerable size and breadth. The opening movement begins as an *Allegro moderato e sostenuto*, softly. It undergoes many tempo and mood changes. The finale is a theme and set of variations. Again there are wide mood swings, high drama and powerful climaxes are interspersed with quiet, calmer and more reflective episodes. This is a powerful work of considerable originality which deserves to be heard once again. The second work is his **Piano Trio Op. 27** which was composed and published in 1910. Despite the higher opus number and the fact that it was composed ten years later, it sounds like it predates the Piano Quartet. The first movement, *Allegro con Brio*, has for its main theme a very heroic melody which does begin with plenty of brio but in the expertly treated and surprisingly long development section the music calms down and does not really pick up enough steam, even in the coda, to be considered brio. The second movement, *Larghetto Maestoso*, features some very romantic writing in the string parts which in the middle section loses some focus during a mysterious sounding interlude. The finale, *Allegro energico, non presto*, although marked non presto nonetheless has a lively, somewhat Beethovenian restless main subject. The development is also Beethovenian—one can hear echoes of the last movement of the Third Rasumovsky Op.59 No.3. The conclusion is also Beethovenian in the fashion of the Archduke Trio. Both of these late romantic era works are good, though perhaps not great. Still, this is a recommended CD.

The Prussian cellist **Johann Benjamin Gross** (1809-1848) and his music are virtually unknown and his name no longer appears in the standard reference sources. However, during his lifetime, he was well-known and frequently performed with Mendelssohn and the Schumanns. Born in the East Prussian town of Elbing, by the mid-1830's, he was already serving as solo cellist in Berlin and later in Leipzig. Most of his works were either for



## A Piano Quartet, String Quartet & Clarinet Quintet from Herbert Howells Trios for Flute, Bassoon & Piano by Friedrich Kuhlau & Gaetano Donizetti

the cello or voice, but he also wrote four string quartets. On **Laborie CD 27585** we find his **String Quartet No.3 in f minor, Op.37** was composed in 1843. The first movement is a very Mendelssohnian, *Allegro di molto*, complete with a dramatic recitative for the first violin, which recalls Mendelssohn's Op.13. The main theme of the relatively short second movement, *Cavatina*, is somewhat subdued and stately. The third movement, marked *Alternativo*, begins in canonic fashion and is a scherzo which at times seems Beethovenian. The finale, *Allegro con passione*, opens with several explosive chords before the somewhat tragic, Mendelssohnian-tinged main theme is introduced. The music is propelled by a thrusting forward drive. A surprisingly good work despite some strong Mendelssohnian influence. Recommended.



**Herbert Howells** (1892-1983) was born Howells was born in Lydney, Gloucestershire. His father was an amateur organist, and Herbert himself showed early musical promise. In 1910, at a concert in Gloucester Cathedral he heard the premiere of Ralph Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*. He recalled that the work had a profound effect on him. A few weeks later he went to London where studied with Charles Villiers, Stanford, Hubert Parry and Charles Wood. He himself joined the faculty there in 1920.

In his twenties and thirties his compositional output focused chiefly on orchestral and chamber music and all of the works on **Lyritya CD 292** are from this period. These works were originally released on LP in 1975 and I gather in the UK a year or two earlier than here. The first work on disk is his 1916 **Piano Quartet in a minor, Op.21**, which is in three movements. It is dedicated to Choscn and his friend Ivor Gurney, the poet. Choscn is a hill lying midway between Gloucester and Cheltenham which on a clear day commands an excellent view of the Malvern hills. The opening movement, *Allegro moderato tranquillo*, begins with sweeping phrases using pentatonic tonalities. Howells employs the cyclic principle and there are thematic links between each of the movements. The middle movement, *Lento molto tranquillo*, is elegiac and builds on a theme from the prior *Allegro moderato*. The finale, *Allegro molto energico*, is a spirited folk dance. The second work on disk is his **Fantasy String Quartet, Op.25** which was composed the year after the Piano Quartet. It, too, adopts the cyclic principle but since the work is in one continuous movement it is not as obvious. Moods vary with the folk themes introduced but melodic line is continually permutating so that it is difficult to recognize. The main theme is first heard in a solo violin to the accompaniment of a sustained chord in the other strings. The middle section is a kind of scherzo which is followed by a slow interlude. The climax comes toward the finish but the work ends peacefully. Again, we have a work evocative of the English countryside. The finale work presented is the 1919 **Rhapsodic Quintet for Clarinet and Strings**. Here the music is more chromatic and the folk elements are not as pronounced. Of the three

works this is the hardest to get a grip on, its fluidity of form makes it hard to follow and it does not readily fall into distinct episodes but is rather like a continuous self-generating stream of song. Despite the lack of folk song, much of the work exudes the quality of a pastoral idyll. These are all interesting works and worthwhile, recommended.



**Classical Records CD 125** presents three trios for the little-served combination of Flute, Bassoon and Piano. The first is by **Friedrich Kuhlau** (1786-1832), often called the "Beethoven of the Flute", for the many fine pieces that he composed for that instrument. Though it is generally assumed, by those who have heard of him, that he was a flute virtuoso, ironically, he never played the instrument. Born in Germany, after being blinded in one eye in a freak street accident, he studied piano in Hamburg. In 1810, he fled to Copenhagen to avoid conscription in the Napoleonic Army. He became a Danish citizen and lived in Copenhagen the rest of his life. During his lifetime, he was known primarily as a concert pianist and composer of Danish opera, but wrote in virtually every genre. The **Trio in G Major for Flute, Bassoon & Piano, Op.119** was not published until after the composer's death and, though originally for two flutes and piano, soon appeared in several arrangements. In the opening movement, *Allegro moderato*, the thematic material is almost entirely entrusted to the winds. It has the sound of early Beethoven. A slow movement entitled, *Adagio pathetico*, follows. However, the music is basically upbeat with no hint of pathos except for a few short phrases in the middle section. Up until this point, the music has been fairly ordinary and entirely forgettable. It is the finale, *Rondo allegro*, with buoyant main subject, which is rather like a polacca, that remedies this situation. It is a jaunty dance theme which sticks in mind.

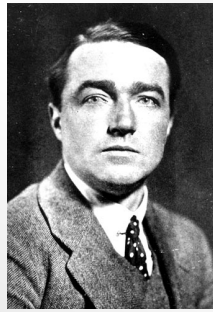


The famous opera composer **Gaetano Donizetti** (1797-1848) needs no introduction. But what most people do not know is that he wrote a fair amount of chamber music, including 18 string quartets, some string quintets, piano trios as well as several other instrumental works. This was due to the fact that in his youth, Donizetti, who was a more than adequate violinist, was often invited to play at the homes of local amateurs who became patrons and for whom he would compose works. Many works were begun which Donizetti never bothered to finish and there are several manuscripts of one, two and three movement works which break off without conclusion. The **Trio in F Major for Flute, Bassoon and Piano** may be one such work. There are only two movements, *Larghetto* and *Allegro*. There are clear elements of operatic writing to be found in the *Larghetto*. One can well imagine an orchestra in the piano part accompanying arias in the winds. The substantial *Allegro*, however appears to be purely instrumental music. Hardly a great work, but pleasant enough. One knows going in that great masterpieces are not found in such trios. What one finds is a pleasant diversion.

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE



Benjamin Godard



Ernest Moeran



Joseph Marx



John Antes



Donald Tovey



Carl Reinecke



Ferdinand Hiller



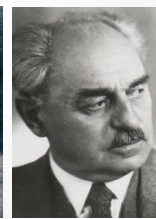
Joseph Haas



Egon Kornauth



Anton Gatscha



Heinrich Schmid



Otto Tichy

ONSLOW, SPOHR, STENHAMMAR, FUCHS, KIEL



HERZOGENBERG, GLIERE, TANEYEV, REINECKE

WRANITZKY, RIES, GOVY, REICHA, TURINA, TOCH, PFITZNER, ROTA

KROMMER, LACHNER, GRANADOS, VAN BREE, GRETCHANINOV